

Centennial Launch Edition

Find Your Park

Listings of Events and Initiatives

Celebrating the Centennial:

Find Your Park

The National Park Service Centennial provides an opportunity to introduce the National Park Service to the next generation of visitors, supporters, and advocates; to re-engage those who already know and love the parks; and reflect on the vast network of public lands and protected places set aside for all Americans. There are several national initiatives designed to celebrate the century mark of the National Park Service. The celebration being launched now begins with *National Park Centennial Find Your Park Campaign*.

The main creative idea behind the *Find Your Park (FYP)* campaign is to redefine the word “park.” More than just a physical, tangible place, a park can be a feeling, a state of mind, a sense of what it is to be an American. This is part of what it means to be a national park, a national wildlife refuge, a state historic site, and so much more. This concept can help us express the totality of what the National Park Service and all of our public lands and conservation partners are all about.

We know that parks are important to most people and we are aware that many times park users are totally unaware of what agency operates their oft used special park space.

We want you to find your park and to tell us about it by taking pictures, and then visiting FindYourPark.com to share pictures, stories, and then spread the word via Twitter, Facebook and Instagram using #FindYourPark, #<Park Name>, and #NationalParks.

The mission of this campaign is to fuel awareness and interest in the NPS and all lands, their resources, and their communities, driving advocacy for all our nation’s public lands. The larger goal is to create a sense of stewardship for all public land and for the larger conservation ethic.



***I Found My Park!** Top: Don Riepe tells the story of nature against the backdrop of NYC with this shot of terns and cormorants taking flight in Jamaica Bay. Below, Jonathan Kruk, Storyteller, finds Floyd Bennett Field in this picture taken by Steve Kelman.*

Find Your Park: Gateway Photo Contest

“I Found My Park!” will be the theme of the July Gateway Photo Contest. During that month we will be accepting “I Found My Park!” entries from July 1-31.

Points will be scored by pictures that tell a story and readily identify the park or unit. The overall theme will be nature/people/ park images against the backdrop of New York/New Jersey metropolitan area. We will receive submissions during July; winners will be announced at the end of August. We will have an exhibit at the Jamaica Bay Wildlife Refuge which will feature the winners and the top contenders.

Be sure to collect your wonderful *I Found My Park!* pictures to enter in to our summer photo contest.

Area Students Help Celebrate the Centennial

One of the "Call to Action" activities for celebrating the centennial is "A Class Act." Parks across the country have adopted classes of students to work on place-based service learning projects over the course of three years, culminating in a 2016 celebratory event. Here at Gateway, education rangers are working with schools in Willingboro, NJ and Brooklyn, NY with teachers who have had extensive experiences at Gateway.

Tracy Hall, a fifth grade teacher at J. C. Stuart Elementary, in New Jersey, worked as a Teacher-Ranger-Teacher in 2011 and 2012, and as a seasonal ranger at Sandy Hook each summer since. While a Teacher-Ranger-Teacher, Tracy developed programs to introduce her diverse student body to Sandy Hook's rich natural and military history. Her students are comparing aquatic organisms found in fresh water near school to the marine environment at Sandy Hook. As part of their centennial program her class will consider what human activities cause stress on these vital aquatic organisms.

Science teacher Jennifer Porcheddu at Edward R Murrow High School, Brooklyn, also has many years of involvement with Gateway. In 2006 Jennifer and her classes participated in a live web broadcast called Estuary Live through which her students explained scientific data they collected about Jamaica Bay to students across the nation. More recently Jennifer worked in the field collecting data about piping plovers, reptiles and amphibians as part of the Teacher-Ranger-Teacher program. On her Nature NYC blog, <http://www.naturenyc.org/teacher-ranger-teacher-program/previous/2>, Jennifer helps students learn about the scientific career possibilities in the natural sciences.

Jennifer is also a skilled artist. Her "Class Act" program

focuses on having students visit three Gateway locations and then have the students create various forms of art to convey their new found attachments to Gateway's natural beauty.

Grant to Fund Pollinator Replanting Program

In 2014, Gateway received a grant of \$25,000 from the National Park Foundation for its "Growing a Wild Brooklyn and Queens education program." Thirteen NYC schools are participating in this year-long, multi-visit program in which students (grades K-12) learn how to observe, monitor and record data about pollinator species found in the park. With guidance from Gateway rangers and Student Conservation Association interns, students collect seeds from native flowering plants in the park, and germinate seedlings in their classrooms. In spring, these seedlings are planted to create habitats in our park and local communities to improve habitat for native pollinators, such as bumblebees and monarch butterflies.

Gateway is collaborating with National Wildlife Federation Eco-Schools, Greenbelt Native Plant Center, Community Greenways Collaborative, and National Park Foundation on this project. Please join us for the *Growing a Wild Brooklyn & Queens* exhibit which opens on June 11 at the Ryan Center, Floyd Bennett Field, Brooklyn.

Visit FindYourPark.com to share pictures, stories, and then spread the word via Twitter, Facebook and Instagram using #FindYourPark, #<Park Name>, and #NationalParks. Collect your pictures to enter our Find Your Park photo contest in July.

Selected Centennial Programs and Events

Jamaica Bay

Growing a Wild Brooklyn & Queens Exhibit

Ryan Visitor Center
Floyd Bennett Field, [Brooklyn](#)

Thursday, June 12- July 31
A sampling of photographs, student art and literary work created by students in the Growing a Wild Brooklyn and Queens on exhibit.

Play by the Bay A Family Fun Day

Ryan Visitor Center,
Floyd Bennett Field, [Brooklyn](#)
Sunday, June 14

1-5 PM FREE

Presented by NYC Parks and National Park Service.
Experience activities and demonstrations include camping, kayaking, biking, life birds of prey, live music dance and storytelling.

Accessible by the Q35 bus and bike by Flatbush Ave. and the Jamaica Bay For information nyc.gov/parksnps.gov/gator more information, call 718-338-3799.

Beach Campfire

Jacob Riis Park, [Queens](#)
Boardwalk and Beach 169 Street
Thursday, July 2
7 – 10 PM

Join park staff for a National Park Service tradition: the campfire program! Join us for this fun summer get-together as we learn about and celebrate the great resources found in your park. Bring a chair or blanket, a musical instrument if you play one, and most importantly, marshmallows and s'mores fixings!

Founder's Day Birthday Party

Tuesday, August 25

11 AM- 3 PM

Ryan Visitor Center

Floyd Bennett Field, [Brooklyn](#)

Celebrate the 99th birthday of the National Park Service with fun birthday-themed activities, cake, and other refreshments! Learn more about the history of the NPS and what is in store for our centennial year.

Shorebird Festival

Jamaica Bay Wildlife Refuge

Saturday, August 29 [Queens](#)

All day event; times TBA.

Join us for this annual event to celebrate Jamaica Bay as a mecca for migrating shorebirds. Day-long program includes walks and talks by leading bird experts. For more information, contact Don Riepe (718) 318-9344; email donriepe@gmail.com

Sandy Hook

Coastal Defense Weekend May 15-17

Fort Hancock Museum

Friday, May 15

7:30-9:30 PM

Join the Army Ground Forces Association volunteers on a tour of Fort Hancock's big guns. The walk will include Battery Potter and Battery Gunnison. Volunteers will be interpreting New Peck/Battery Gunnison as it was manned in May 1943.

Battery Gunnison

Sunday May 17

12 - 4:30 PM

Volunteers from the AGFA will bring Battery Gunnison/New Peck and its 6 inch guns to life, as they were in May 1943. Visitors will have the opportunity to load guns, track ships, and take a tour of the plotting room and magazine.

Coastal Defense Weekend May 15-17

Ocean Fun Day

New Jersey Sea Grant,

Building 22

Sunday May 17

11 AM – 4 PM

Spend the day [with](#) your family enjoying hands on fun while learning about our environment. Free admission.

Sandy Hook "BioBlitz"

American Littoral Society

Headquarters Bldg18

Friday, September 18 - Saturday, September

3 p.m. - 3 p.m.

Help to discover the biological diversity found on the Sandy Hook peninsula. Participate in field explorations, assist with species counts, and learn about the natural ecosystems through walks and displays. Registration is required. More information to follow.

To receive this program guide and notifications of special events, via email send a message to Charles.Markis@nps.gov with program guide in subject line.

Find Your Park and Tell Us with Photos

We want pictures that show your park in context of its setting and demonstrate, people, nature, communities against the backdrop of NYC metropolitan area.

We will announce the full contest rules in the coming edition of the Program Guide.

Other Event Reminders:

Cruise, Discover and Explore Celebrate the NPS [Centennial](#)

We are offering several special programs for those who want to cruise, discover and explore.

Day of Discovery Jamaica Bay,
Friday, April 10: Bird walk;
Talk: Tips and Tricks of
Nature, Cruise on the
America's Princess

CANCELLED

Jamaica Bay Ecology Cruise,
Saturday, May 30; Twilight Cruise
on Golden Sunshine, with Don
Riepe, wine, cheese, fruit, snacks.
3-6pm. donriepe@gmail.com

Kayak/Camping Excursion:
May 30, 11am to May 31, 4:30pm.
Paddle from Floyd Bennett Field to
Fort Wadsworth for an overnight
camp out, limited space for
experienced paddlers.

*Reservations required for these
programs; fee for Twilight Cruise.*

FOR KIDS SAVE THE DATE:

Junior Ranger Day

Jamaica Bay Wildlife Refuge –

Saturday, April 25 [Queens](#)

10AM-4:30PM

Floyd Bennett Field - [Brooklyn](#)

Family fun for kids: Come to the
visitor centers at both Floyd Bennett
and the Refuge for Junior Ranger
Activities all day, have fun and earn a
Junior Ranger Badge!